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Anti-Islam Filmmaker Hiding After Deadly Protests

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People shout and hold slogans in front of the U.S. embassy during a protest in Cairo, Egypt, September 11, 2012.



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VOA NewsSeptember 12, 2012

A man who calls himself Sam Bacile claims he produced the amateurish movie The Innocence of Muslims, which has outraged some Muslims and led to the death of four U.S. diplomats during a protest in Libya.

Speaking to the Associated Press from hiding, the man said he is an Israeli-born Jewish writer and real estate developer in California. The purported filmmaker said he wanted to make a provocative movie to help expose Islam's flaws to the world.

But there is no public record of a person with that name and profession in California, and Israeli officials say there is no record either of his being a citizen of Israel.

The Associated Press tracked the cell phone number used to reach the filmmaker and found at in the Los Angeles area a Coptic Christian named Nakoula Basseley Nakoula. Nakoula said he helped produce the movie, but he denied posing as Sam Bacile.

Steve Klein, a Christian activist who says he was a consultant for the movie, told reporters earlier that Sam Bacile is a pseudonym and that the filmmaker is not Israeli and probably not even Jewish. He told The Atlantic magazine that about 15 people worked on the film, all of them American citizens, but some of them are from Syria, Turkey, Pakistan, Egypt and elsewhere.

He said Bacile is concerned about the safety of his family, which he said is in Egypt.

It is not clear how many people saw the two-hour movie, but the 14-minute trailer in English and Arabic, posted on YouTube, sparked anger among ultra-conservative Muslims in Egypt, Libya and elsewhere. It shows the Muslim prophet as a fraud, a womanizer and a terrorist.

During a protest outside the U.S. consulate in Benghazi Tuesday, unknown gunmen killed U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens and three other U.S. staff members.

The man calling himself Bacile said he was sorry about the ambassador's death, but he blamed the security system at the U.S. mission.

The Associated Press has found that Nakoula pleaded no contest in 2010 to federal bank fraud charges in California, and was ordered to pay more than \$780,000 in restitution. Public records also show that he was sentenced to 21 months in federal prison and ordered not to use computers or the Internet for five years without approval from his probation officer.

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- by: Anonymous

September 12, 2012 11:36 PM

Even if I disagree with the film I will die to protect his right to say and make it. Killers in Libya are to blame, they are soley responsible and not one bit the filmmaker.

Reply
- by: Kevin from: Idaho

September 12, 2012 9:32 PM

HOW ABOUT EXPLORING THE THOUGHT: President Obama and Vice President Biden spiking the ball when they said "ask Osama Bin Ladded if he's better off now." Now I am just Kevin the Carpenter, but I would think that could invite rioting muslims rather than excite the DNC. What kind of lame foreign policy for a US President is that.

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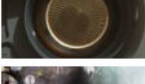
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